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January 26, 1996

Arthur D. Eisenberg, Ph.D.
Associate Research Director
Council for Tobacco Res-USA
900 Third Ave.
New York, NY 10022

FASEB

Dear Dr. Eisenberg:

Dr. Irwin Rosenberg and I are organizing a summer conference for the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology on the topic of *Folic Acid, Vitamin B_{12} and One Carbon Metabolism*. The Conference is to be held at the Vermont Academy, Saxtons River, Vermont from August 3 - August 8, 1996. The FASEB Conferences bring a modest number of researchers together for intense scientific discussion over a five-day period. Each conference focuses on nine carefully selected topics in the most promising and exciting areas in this area of research.

The conference on *Folic Acid, Vitamin B_{12} and One Carbon Metabolism* will deal with our current knowledge of the biochemistry of folate and vitamin B_{12}, and the clinical effects of deficiencies or disturbances in their metabolism. This is a particularly opportune and exciting time for a conference in this area because of the recent findings demonstrating that elevated plasma homocysteine, which is influenced by folate and vitamin B_{12} status, is a major risk factor for vascular disease, that seventy percent of neural tube defect pregnancies, including spina bifida, can be prevented by folate supplementation, and epidemiological evidence relating folate status to cancer risk. Sessions have been scheduled on folate requirements for the maintenance of optimal health, the relationship of folate and homocysteine to vascular disease, folate and neural tube defects, clinical aspects of folic acid and vitamin B_{12} deficiency, and the transport of folates, antifolates and vitamin B_{12}. Other sessions involve folate dependent enzymes, vitamin B_{12}-dependent enzymes, and the regulation of one carbon metabolism and methionine synthesis. Additional sessions cover adenosylmethionine and methyl group transfer reactions as well as emerging targets for new chemotherapeutic agents against malignant diseases. There will be many opportunities for informal discussions which will allow graduate students, residents and postdoctoral fellows, as well as established scientists, an opportunity to present and discuss their work. Poster presentations will allow additional information on topics related to this research to be included in the program. About 35 speakers from North America and Europe have tentatively accepted invitations. Many of these are dependent upon financial support. I have enclosed a copy of the tentative program in order to give you a more precise appreciation for the high quality and interdisciplinary nature of the meeting. Recent progress in this area of research has been explosive and this meeting should be particularly timely in helping to bring focus to the significance of current developments. This conference offers a unique opportunity for basic and clinician scientists from a broad group of disciplines, who share an interest in folic acid, vitamin B_{12} and one carbon metabolism, to interact both formally and informally.

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I am trying to raise funds for partial support of speakers' travel and meeting expenses. Travel may cost up to $700 for West Coast participants, for example. The room, board and registration costs for the meeting are approximately $450 per person. We also wish to support at least 10 junior investigators (at $500 a piece) who might otherwise not be able to attend. These promising young investigators represent the new blood of this field who will be making significant contributions in the coming decades. Attendance is limited to 160, including speakers. The conference will be advertised by FASEB to its entire membership as well as in various scientific journals and society newsletters. Thus, I am writing to you to inquire about a possible financial contribution. In the past, these conferences have been supported by federal grants and grants from private organizations, such as yours. With the sharp cutback in federal funding, contributions from private sources have become even more essential.

If you would like more details about the meeting, please feel free to contact me at 510-642-5202. The Vice-Chairperson, Irv Rosenberg, can be called at 617-556-3330. We will greatly appreciate any financial help you can give. Checks should be annotated - *Folic Acid, Vitamin B_{12} and One Carbon Metabolism* - and made payable to: FASEB Summer Research Conferences, 9650 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20814-3998.

Yours sincerely,

Barry Shane, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair

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